

REMARKSSummary of the Office Action

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application.

The drawings has been objected to for failing to illustrate certain details of claims 5-9, 11, and 17-20.

The specification has been objected to for failing to provide proper antecedent basis for claims 6-8, and 17-20.

Claims 5-8 and 11 have been rejected for failing to provide proper antecedent basis to "second catheter shaft portion."

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 10, 12, and 14-15 are rejected as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,775,371 to Mueller, Jr. ("Mueller").

Claims 1-3, 9-10 have been rejected as allegedly anticipated by U.S. patent No. 6,544,224 to Steese-Bradley ("Steese-Bradley").

Claims 1-6, 9,10, 12, 14-15, 16 have been rejected as allegedly anticipated by U.S. patent No. 6,746,423 to Wantink ("Wantink").

Claims 11 and 13 have been rejected as allegedly anticipated by Wantink in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,951,494 to Wang ("Wang").

Applicant' Response***Specification***

Paragraph [0035] of the specification has been amended to include a description of the metal spring rected in claims 7 and 8. The sleeve recited in claim 6 also is described in amended paragraph [0035].

Because claims 17-20 have been cancelled, the Examiner's objection as to proper antecedent basis for those claims is now moot.

Drawings

Figs. 5 and 6 in new sheet 2/2 enclosed to the present amendment illustrate the metal spring in the two different configurations recited in claims 7 and 8.

The kink protection recited in amended claim 5 is already illustrated in Fig. 4 with reference numeral 14.

The sleeve recited in amended claim 6 is already illustrated in Fig. 4 with reference numeral 16.

Because claims 9, 11, and 17-20 have been canceled, the Examiner's request for illustrations of the elements of those claims is now moot.

Applicant respectfully asserts that no new matter has been introduced by the addition of new Figs.

The Prior Art Rejections

Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to patentably distinguish the present invention over the prior art of record. In particular, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite that the guiding wire lumen "***comprises a pipe having proximal and distal portions disposed substantially concentrically within the catheter shaft, the proximal portion comprises a more rigid material than the distal portion.***" Support for these recitations is found in the specification in paragraphs 31-33 and in Figs. 1-4. Such a structure is not disclosed by Mueller, Steese-Bradley, Wantink, nor any other prior art of record.

Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is neither taught in, nor suggested by, the prior art of record. Moreover, dependent claims 4-8 and 13 also are allowable over the prior art of record for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 4-8, 13, 21-26 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nicola A. Pisano", is written over a horizontal line.

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